

## **Board of Examining Chaplains: Report to Diocesan Convention 2021**

The Board of Examining Chaplains (BEC) works in partnership with the Commission on Ministry (COM) to support candidates for ordination to both the diaconate and priesthood in their formation and to ensure that the academic and intellectual requirements and competencies specified in the Canons as required for ordination are met. The work of the BEC involves assisting those in the formation process, both advising and tracking their academic progress. As each candidate is making final application for ordination, the BEC offers its certification to the COM, Standing Committee, and Bishop that the individual has met the academic criteria for ordination.

Candidates for the vocational diaconate are required by the canons to demonstrate proficiency in five areas: Academic studies including Holy Scriptures, theology, and the tradition of the Church; Diakonia and the diaconate; Human awareness and understanding; Spiritual development and discipline; and Practical training and experience. Candidates are invited to demonstrate their proficiencies through preparation of Learning Portfolios, compiled over the course of their formation, which they present to members of the BEC and COM.

Candidates for the priesthood are required by the canons to demonstrate competency in seven areas: Holy Scripture, History of the Christian Church, Christian Theology, Christian Ethics and Moral Theology, Christian worship according to the Book of Common Prayer, the Hymnal and additional Texts authorized for use by the Episcopal Church, and the Practice of Ministry in Contemporary Society. The Episcopal Church administers the General Ordination Examination each January to individuals nominated by their Bishops, who have completed or who are nearing completion of their academic studies. The BEC utilizes the GOE exams in conjunction with the academic records of candidates to certify candidates' competencies.

In 2021 the BEC worked with four individuals in the ordination process. In January we reviewed the Learning Portfolio of Jac Essing and spent a wonderful session in conversation with her about her formation and ministry. In March we read and discussed the GOEs of three diocesan candidates who took the exams in January. In each case we recommended some revision of the initial GOE answers in order to confirm the candidates' proficiency. When that revision was (very successfully) completed, we were glad to affirm proficiencies of Joel Martinez and Phillip Shearin.

The ministry of the BEC is important for the Diocese as part of the process of raising up persons to serve in the ministry, and so it is a privilege for all of us who serve on the committee. I am grateful for the diligent and faithful work of BEC members in the past year. Serving on the Board in 2020--21 were Dr. Tamsin Jones Farmer, Dr. Elizabeth Keitel, Dr. Richard Kimball, Rev. Dcn. Pat O'Connell, Rev. Barbara Thrall, and Rev. Dr. Jane Tillman.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Dr. Molly Scherm